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Press release - Rail Standardisation

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PRESS RELEASE FROM THE PREMIER (MR. DUNSTAN).

RAIL STANDARDISATION.

29/6/71

The State Government has won significant concessions from the Commonwealth on the question of rail standardisation, the Premier (Mr. Dunstan) announced today.

Mr. Dunstan said the Federal Government had now agreed to the most important of the State Government's proposals for the scheme. "Under the agreement Adelaide will now be linked with the East-West gauge link by a new line from Adelaide to Crystal Brook", he said. Important concessions which S.A. has gained are standard gauge connections to industry at Elizabeth, Woodville and Mile End.

The Premier said standard gauge facilities would also be provided at Dry Creek, Islington, Pooraka and Pt. Adelaide and the standard gauge would be extended from Snowtown in the Lower North to Wallaroo on Yorke Peninsula.

The Government, soon after it came into office last June, informed the Commonwealth that the scheme agreed to by the previous Government was unacceptable as it did not connect the State's heavy industries directly to the standard gauge.

Instead the State Government sought provision for a number of direct connections to industrial centres within the metropolitan area, the Premier said.

"These connections to industry will lead to a much more efficient operation by eliminating the costs and inconvenience of trans-shipment and by permitting better usage of locomotives and rolling stock.

"This will make an important contribution to our industries and to the people who depend on them for a livelihood", Mr. Dunstan said.

The Transport Minister, Mr. Virgo, said today officials and design staff of S.A. Railways were already studying traffic requirements anticipated after standardisation and during the conversion period. Planning was under way on standard gauge installations, locomotives and rolling stock and on the staging of works to permit uninterrupted traffic flow during the conversion.

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The next stage would be a conference between the Commonwealth Minister for Shipping and Transport, Mr. Nixon, and himself to arrange the engagement of consultants and to provide a formal agreement for the project to begin.
